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The use of English in the Engineering field

The importance of English for engineers

- English is one of the widely spoken languages around the world. For an engineer and an engineering student, English language fluency is important both in studies and career.

- Engineering is one of the largest fields of study and many of the works of research and academics are recorded in English. Without fluency in English, engineering students may find it difficult to understand the concept being conveyed by the authors.

- The English language is now a bridge language of international business, technology, research and aviation. About 1.8 billion speak English and the number is still rising

- Most of the theories are taught in English language. For this reason, an expected level of proficiency in English language would be essential.

- The English Language is the most important medium of acquiring information from various printed, Audio-visual or electronic media and materials. It is also of immense importance for engineering students in publishing the findings of their research, communicating in their office and also for furthering their academic career. English language is indispensable for the people who have adopted engineering as their career.

- To study abroad in some of the best universities in the world, students have to take up standardised tests to prove their English language proficiency. These tests play a major role for admissions to most of the universities overseas. These tests are measurements carried out to ensure that the students from non-English speaking countries are able to write, listen, and converse in English fluently.

- Engineers today have to communicate with their counterparts across the globe. Among most of the professionals like the scientists, technologists and business experts who belong to different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, English is predominantly considered to be a language of communication.

- In today's world, employers seek graduates with sound communication skills, along with technical engineering knowledge. Having good communication skills is a valuable asset for any organisation. Professionals with strong hold on English language are set in higher level of standards in the organisation.

- All in all, English language fluency is a significant aspect of an engineering student's academic life and future career.

English used in academic and professional spheres

- There is a huge widespread of English informal expressions, due to the constant exposure to American movies, series, reality shows, which use, most of the times, informal English. That is why it is important to distinguish between the two types of language, and when to adopt each one of them.

- As university students, and future engineers, using English as a medium of communication or writing technical reports of your engineering projects, formal English is highly required, since the adoption of the informal style of writing might give a bad impression about you, and your academic and intellectual level.

- It is important to use standardised/formal English when writing an academic essay, as it prevents confusion and demonstrates your ability to communicate effectively in an academic setting.

- In **academic writing**, though, formal English is best. The same is true when writing technical texts or while communicating with authority figures or other officials. It is also important to be formal when contacting someone you do not know for professional reasons.

Difference between Formal and informal English

- Formal usually refers to a categorical difference between formal and informal/casual language.

- Languages make that distinction in different ways. In American English, referring to someone directly as “sir” or “ma’am” instead of “you” would be formal. English also has procedural or formulaic formality. In court, you speak a certain way to a judge and other lawyers, for example. An attorney would not say, “Hey, Joe — I object to that last point my knucklehead opponent made” — rather, you would hears something like, “Your honor, I object to counsel raising that point.” (Or, like on TV, you might just hear, “Objection.”

- In job interviews and other formal situations, people usually speak formally. In other words, in English, formality is conveyed in keeping with (a) roles and relationships and (b) social context.

- Formal (or standard) English is often used in academic and professional settings, giving us a standard way of communicating with others. It's also more common in writing than speech. The important thing to know about formal English is that it sticks closely to prescriptive rules of spelling, grammar and punctuation.

- Formal language is less personal than informal language

- It is used when writing for professional or academic purposes like university assignments.

- The kind of language we use in everyday life is usually informal or non-standard to some degree. This doesn't mean we abandon grammar and spelling, just that we don't worry about the formal rules all the time. There are, in fact, many non-standard forms of English, including poetry, regional dialects, and even the used in SMS messages and online.

- Informal language is **more casual and spontaneous.**

- It is used when **communicating with friends or family** either in writing or in conversation.

Contractions

Formal Writing	Informal Writing
No contractions e.g. did not	Uses contractions e.g. didn’t

- What are contractions?

"Didn't", "wouldn't", "couldn't", "haven't", "hasn't".

Idioms

- **'A piece of cake'**– something is very easy.
  "The English test was a piece of cake."
- **'To kill two birds with one stone'** – to solve two problems at once.
  "By taking my dad on holiday, I killed two birds with one stone. I got to go away but also spend time with him."
- **I've been very under the weather** lately." ➔ which means **I've been very sick.**

Phrasal Verbs

- What is a phrasal verb?

Verb + Preposition (of, at, in, …)

- for example: "find out", "find" is a verb, "out" is the preposition. "Go" is the verb, "up" is the preposition.

Informal	Formal
Find out	Discover
Go up	Increase

Imperatives

- Sentences that start with a verb

Example: Send it soon => you may send it at your earliest convenience.

The use of ‘I’ or ‘We’

- Formal writing is not personal
- No use of ‘I’ and ‘we’ in formal English.
- Example:

Informal=> **I considered** various research methods for the study.

Formal => Various research methods **were considered** for the study.

Abbreviations/ Acronyms

Informal	Formal
TV	Television
CAD	Computer-assisted design
ASAP	As soon as possible

- Write the name in full with the acronym in brackets after it.

Other differences

Informal	Formal
➢ Very, really, totally	➢ Strongly
➢ On top of it all	➢ Furthermore, Besides, Moreover
➢ !	➢ No exclamation marks
➢ A lot	➢ Many/ much

Informal Phrasal Verbs

- Ask around (about something)
- Back up (a plan)
- blow up (a balloon)
- break down (A vehicle)
- Break in (a show)
- Do away with (belongings)
- Bring about (a problem)
- Go against (an argument)

Other expressions

- Hi Robert,

=> Dear Sir or Madam

- Just wanted to let you know

=> I am writing to inform you

- Love, Cheers, Yours Truly, Best regards, kind regards,

=> Yours Sincerely, Yours Faithfully,

- Hope to hear from you soon

=> I look forward to hearing from you

- You can call me if you need anything

=> Pease do not hesitate to contact me

Thank you